

AN EARNEST
INVITATION
TO THE
SACRAMENT
OF THE
Lords Supper.

BY
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The Second Edition.

L O N D O N,
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To the Right Reverend
Dr. Peter Mewvs,
LORD BISHOP Elect.
OF
Bath and Wells.

MY LORD,



Was just sending away the last sheets of the ensuing plain discourse to the Press, when the news
A 2 came

The Epistle

*came of your being made
Bishop of this Diocess:
I was exceedingly trans-
ported with the tidings
of so great a blessing
befaln this part of the
Church, and could not
restrain my joy from
running out into this
Application & Address,
which I intend not so
much to congratulate
your new Dignity, as
the happiness of Us,
your Clergy, and this
whole*

Dedictory.

whole People, in the
relation we now have to
so excellent a person.
Your Lordships wis-
dom, justice, piety,
and diligence have
made themselves so e-
minent in the long con-
tinued, happy, and ap-
plauded Government of
one of the most famous
Universities of the
world, that we confi-
dently promise our
selves great felicities
A 3 from

The Epistle

from the Paternal Presidency and Authority of such an experienced Governour; And I believe there is not a concerned man, who is sensible of the advantages of good order, but blesseth God and the King for so gracious and desirable an Election. This, My Lord, I might speak upon the publick Fame of your known merits, but besides

Dedictory.

sides that I have had particular experience of your wisdom and candour, which gives me a greater passion to declare the veneration I have for you; and I wish I could do it in a way suitable to your great worth, and mine own resentments of it; but instead of a proper testimony, I must beg your Lordship to accept of a sincere one; and such
I

The Epistle

I here make you in this
small offering, the slender
First-fruits of your
Diocess.

The Discourse I first
design'd only for the use
of my own people, but I
knew not how to get
transcribed Copies e-
nough for them; and I
consider'd too many o-
thers needed some such
exhortation, as well as
those of my particular
Charge, and therefore
thought

Dedictory.

thought that this little Essay might not be wholly useless to the Publick. I have writ it in a plain and unheeded style, because I judg such most fit for practical matters, especially in applications to the populace; and take it for an establisht, eternal Rule for such Addresses, whether by preaching or writing, that they should be performed

The Epistle

*formed in the way that
is most easie and natu-
ral; and nothing ought
to be studied in the
language for such occa-
sions, but how to ex-
press the matter most
sensibly and plainly.
But I need not have
made this Apologie to
your Lordship, who
know, That good sense
in an easie and proper
phrase is for ever the
truest and best elo-
quence:*

Dedicatory.

quence: *There is more
cause I should crave
your pardon for prefix-
ing your Lordships name
before a discourse of so
many other imperfecti-
ons: This, my Lord, I
do, and have this to
plead for the obtaining
it, that I was transpor-
ted by the occasion and
the desire I have to
make known how happy
I esteem this Diocess
in so venerable a Pre-
late;*

The Epistle, &c.
late; *and how much*
particularly *I am re-*
joyced at this welcome
Providence, being

Right Reverend Father,

Your Lordships most
affectionate Honourer
and humble Servant,

F. G.

TO THE
PEOPLE of my Charge.

My Dear Neighbours.

ALthough *We* of the publick Ministry cannot expect to do *much* by our perswasions, and indeavours, in such an Age as *this*; Yet we ought to persevere in our work with Courage and Resolution, and not suffer our selves to be overborn by any difficulties, or discouragements what soever: For Duty belongs to us, but events unto God, who will reward the Labourers whatever be the success of their Labours. And as every Minister of Religion ought to be active, and resolved in the *work* and *patience* of the Gospel; So he shall then best acquit himself in it when he studies the *proper needs* of the Age, and place wherein he lives,

B and

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and accordingly directs his indeavours to provide for them. Now there is nothing, that I know, that is wanted more in our Days, than a due sense of the necessity, and advantages of the Holy *Sacrament* of the *Lord's Supper*, the general neglect, not to say contempt of which, hath, I am persuaded, been a great and sad occasion of the debauchery, and divisions that are amongst us; And I verily think, that there could not be a more effectual means to reduce us to *Sobriety* and *Union*, then a frequent, and reverend use of that divine Institution. From this persuasion I have earnestly, and often (as you can bear me witness) press'd this great duty upon your consciences, and affectionately recommended it to your practice. I have represented its *Nature* with all possible plainness, and urged its *Necessity* with a *vigour* in some measure suitable to so great an occasion; I have told you the *danger* of wilful neglect

to the Lords Supper.

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lect on the one hand ; and the *benefits* of due performance, on the other ; But notwithstanding all , there are too many of you, that seem yet insensible, and unconcerned. I have publickly desired those that are either *ignorant* or *dissatisfied*, to accept of my private help, and Instruction, and have offer'd them the utmost of my assistance for their better information, and direction. And after all this, I know not what I can do more to serve you in this great interest of yours, except I put something into your hands that may be ever with you, and that you may consider on all occasions. *Publick Teachings* by word of mouth , are too much looked upon as *customary exercises*, and on that account, they loose their force with *some* ; and the greatest part even of the better Auditors cannot keep their minds so close, and intent, to a *Discourse spoken*, as to receive it in its full evidence, and power ; or though

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the hearers are never so diligent, and careful, our words are forgotten quickly, and the affections that they raise, vanish without any considerable effect upon their wills. For which Reasons, I have resolved upon this Course, to cast some of the plain things I have preach'd concerning the *Holy Sacrament* into writing; That those who are unfit for that great duty by reason of *Ignorance*, may have the properest means of Instruction that I can provide for them, always in their power, and when they please, before their eyes: And that those that *deprive* themselves of the Benefits of this most excellent Ordinance, by reason of the *Mistakes* of their erring understandings: may also have the most suitable help I can give, towards the setting their minds right, and the reconciling them to their Priviledge, and Duty.

For these purposes, I shall (as my manner is) represent what I have
have

to the Lords Supper.

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have to say in the most *distinct*, and *easie* way I can contrive, avoiding all things that are *hard*, either in *notion* or *expression*; And strive, as near as is possible, to speak all along to the most ordinary understandings. For I look upon *plainness* as the best dress for Truth; and my great care, and endeavour constantly is, to be *understood* by *all*, as far as the subject will bear.

In the pursuit of what I intend I mean, by Gods help, to proceed in this order. (1) I shall discourse with all convenient brevity, and plainness, the *Nature* and *design* of the *Lords Supper*; and

(2) Give the *General Reasons* to inforce the Duty; under which head, I shall apply my self to two sorts of Refusers, *viz.* Those that neglect (1) on the account of pure *carelessness*, and *stupidity*; and (2) Those that stand off upon the score of *mistakes* of *Conscience*. In treating with the former, I shall shew

that their obstinate refusal takes off all pretence they can have to Christianity, and puts them into the state of Infidels, and Heathens, yea into a *worse* condition, than *that of meer unbelievers*. As to the other sort, *viz.* The *dissatisfied in Conscience*, I shall consider their *Reasons against Communicating* with us according to the way of our Church, and shew that they are no *justifiable grounds*, why they should refuse to join with us in that solemn part of Christian worship.

CHAP. II.

I Begin with the *First*, The *Nature* of the *Lords Supper*. Concerning *this*, there hath been an infinite diversity of opinions, and disputes; The effects of which differences have been much *Noise*, and many *Tumults*, *Schisms* and *Wars*,

Wars, with a vast heap of mischiefs, and calamities to the Christian world: I shall not therefore trouble you with any thing of needless controverſie, or notion, on this argument; but ſtate it ſo far only, as it relates to *practice*; And I ſhall take all I have to ſay about it from the *Word of God*, the beſt Rule to guid us in the Enquiry. And if *diſputing* men would have been content with *its* declarations in this matter, all the trouble, and miſchiefs had been avoided. But this hath been the miſery; ſome govern their thoughts of this Holy Inſtitution by corrupt, and *novel Traditions*, and others by meer vain and *arbitrary phancies*; Yea, Thoſe who have been right in the main, have yet ſo mingled the plain truth with *alluſions*, and ſpoken of it in ſuch a *phantaſtical*, and *uncertain* way, that ordinary underſtandings have been confounded, and thoſe that are for down-right ſence, without the mixtures of

imagination, have not been able to tell what to make of *that*, which they heard described in such a phanciful, and various fashion. This particularly hath been my own case; I had heard men preach so humour-somely, and so diversly about the *Sacrament*; So much out of their *own* heads, and so little out of the *Oracles* of *God*, That I was quite bewildred, and lost, and come at last to that pass, that I *knew nothing* at all of it; which ignorance, and confusion of thoughts was the natural effect of such discourses; For when men once ramble in the way of *phrases*, *metaphors*, and *conceits*, as they loose themselves, so they perfectly dazzle, and amaze those others, whom they should instruct. I therefore betook my self to the *plain expressions* of *Scripture* concerning this matter; In *them* I found an easie account in the *nature*, and *design* of this divine *Ordinance*. And whither shall we go to enquire after it but to the
words

words of *Institution* themselves?
These I shall consider *first*; and then
gather together those other passa-
ges of Scripture, which tend to
the further explication of it.

1. The words of Institution are
*Mat. 26. [Take, Eat, This is my
Body. v. 26. and Drink ye all of it.
For this is my bloud of the new Testa-
ment, v. 27. 28.]* To which is ad-
ded in the Gospel of St. *Luke* [*Do
this in Remembrance of me.*] *Luke*
22. 19. These words I shall sever-
ally explain, and then infer from
them what is the *nature*, and *design*
of the holy appointment.

**Take, Eat, This is my
Body — and, This is my
Bloud —** Here I take notice,
That **Body**, and **Blood**, do
not relate to the *bread*, and *wine*;
But to the *actions*, *Eat* and *Drink*,
as appears plainly in the * O-
riginal. 'Tis not *this bread*, and

* Ταῦτο, not ἡ τῆς.

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*this wine, are my body and bloud, but this Sacramental eating and drinking of it; In this Christs body and bloud, viz His Incarnation, and sufferings are represented to us. And yet by a Figure, The consecrated Elements may be call'd his body and bloud also; so the Form at the eating the Paschal Supper was, This is the bread of affliction which our Fathers did eat in Egypt; Not the very same, but a Memorial of it, and the State of bondage from which they were deliver'd. Thus 1 Cor 10. 3, 4. Manna is called spiritual bread, and the Rock, spiritual drink, and that Rock, Christ: Not that they could possibly be so in the Letter, but they signified that spiritual food, and were tokens of Christs Prefence. And thus the Sacramental Bread, and Wine may be call'd his Body and Bloud, that is, Figures and Representations of them: and that, not barely of his sufferings, but (as the * Father notes) of all the Miltaries*

of the Incarnation, which are signified, and included. Thus anciently the Elements were call'd, *Figures, Symbols, Images, sensible things* instead of *spiritual*, and we know 'tis in common use to call the *Picture* by the name of that it represents, as *this is a man*, and *that an Angel*. So that there is no ground for the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*, in these words, as the *Roman Church* pretends. But I wave disputes, and come to the next expression to be consider'd.

[**This is the New Testament, or * Covenant in my Bloud**] viz. The Sign, and Seal of the Covenant made in his Bloud; a Covenant wherein God ingageth to bestow on us pardon of Sin, and eternal Life; and we promise faithful and sincere obedience. Thus in the eldest times, Eating, and Drinking were Covenant Rites:

* Διαθήκη.

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as we may see in the compacts between *Isaac* and *Abimilech*, *Gen.* 26. 30. and between *Jacob* and *Laban*, *Gen.* 31. 44, 46. So that the Sacrament is not a *bare Sign*, but 'tis the *Seal* of Gods gracious *Covenant* made with us in his Son.

[**Do this in Remembrance of me**] It hath always been usual to commemorate, and remember Benefactors and great Mercies by *Feasts*, and *Festivals*. The Heathens had their * *Feasts* in memory of their *Heroes*; And the *Passover*, a Type of *this* Supper, was appointed to preserve the memory of the *Israelites* deliverance out of *Egypt*. *Exod.* 12. 14. The *Lamb* was eaten with *bitter herbs*, to commemorate the *bitterness* of their servitude; the *Red Wine* was a Remembrance of their blood which *Pharaoh* spilt, and the *unleavened bread*, to remember them,

* *Αἰνάμενα*, & *Αἰνούντα*—

that

to the Lords Supper.

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that they carried such out of Egypt at their departure: and thus our blessed Saviour hath appointed this *holy Rite* to imprint upon us the *memory* of what he hath *done*, and *suffered* for us, that we might not forget our Deliverance by him, from a bondage greater than Egyptian.

And now from *these* main passages thus explain'd, 'tis easie to infer, That *The Sacrament of the Lords Supper is a Memorial Feast appointed for a solemn Remembrance of Christ our Lord; and a Seal of the Covenant that God hath made with us*
in

in him. Two things then it is principally designed for, (1) To Remember us of our Lord, and Saviour, and (2) to be a *Seal* of the *Covenant* of Grace; of each briefly.

(1) 'Tis for a Remembrance, not only of his *Person*, or only of his *Sufferings*, or any other particular part of his *Ministry*; But we are by it required *thankfully*, and *affectionately* to call to mind, *All* that he hath *done*, and *all* that he hath *suffer'd*; His *Life*, *Doctrine*, and *Laws*; His *Passion*, *Resurrection*, and *Ascension*; His *Victory* over *Sin*, *Death*, and *Hell*; and the *gracious Covenant* that God hath made with us through him: *These* are all included in his *Body*, and *Blood* (as I intimated before) of which the *Holy Sacrament* is a *Sign*, and *Memorial*: And the remembrance of *these*, which we are call'd to by the *Divine Institution*, is not only some *slight*, and *passing* thoughts, but

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but a *solemn* and most *serious* fixing of them upon our minds, in order to the inflaming our affections with love, and our wills with resolution, that we may live answerably to that excellent Religion of the Holy Jesus which we profess.

(2) 'Tis the *Seal* of a *Covenant* [*The new Testament in my bloud*] The *Covenant* is, That God will give *pardon* of Sin, and eternal *Life*, upon the conditions of *Faith* and *Repentance*. This He *seals* to us in the *Sacrament*, and assures us, that he, for *his* part, will make good *his Promises*, and we on *ours*, *seal*, that we will endeavour to perform the *conditions*. So that the *Lords Supper* is a *Sacrament* by which we *confirm* those ingagements we are entred into at *Baptism*. Then our *Sureties* undertook for us, that we should be faithful in the *Covenant*, and in *this* holy Ordinance we take all those obligations upon *our selves*, and in our *own* persons promise to *act* according to them. This

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This plainly, and in short, is the *nature* and *design* of the *Holy Sacrament*; concerning which, there are some other expressions in Scripture which I shall consider briefly, in order to the further explication of the sacred Mystery. The chief are *these*. 'Tis called (1) The *Cup of blessing*. 1 Cor. 10. 16. 2) The *Communion of the Body, and Bloud of Christ*, 1 Cor. 10. 16. and in the duty tis said (3) That we *shew the Lords Death*. 1 Cor. 11. 26.

(1) The **Cup of Blessing**, viz. of *Praise and Thanksgiving*. Our Saviour *Matth. 26* gave thanks when he took the Cup. The Jews used to conclude their *paschal* Supper with a Cup of Wine, at which time they sung an Hymn and therefore call'd it the *Cup of * praising and * blessing*. And the Heathens also after their feasts had their

* Ποθήριον ὑμνήσεων, καὶ * εὐχαρίαι.

* cups

* *cups* of Praise to their Gods; which some take to be the *Cup* of *Devils* mention'd by the Apostle, 1 *Coa.* 10. 21. So that by this we are taught to remember our Lord at his Table with *praise* and *grateful* acknowledgements: And therefore the Ancients from hence call'd the *Lords Supper*, the *Holy Eucharist*, namely, a *Feast* of *Thanksgiving*, and the Solempity was always attended with an hymn of Praise.

(2) **Communion**, (or * **Communication**) of the body and bloud of **Christ**, *viz.* The *Sacrament* is a sacred *Rite* in which God *communicates*, and imparts to all worthy Receivers, the *Benefits* of Christs *Incarnation*, and *Sufferings*. He doth then *rati-* *fy*, *confirm*, and *solemnly* exhibit them, to those that duly attend upon that Divine appointment.

* Ἀγαθὸν δαίμων ὁ. ὁ δὲ δὲ ἐν ᾧ ὁ.

* Κοινωνία.

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(3) [As often as ye eat—
ye do shew the Lords Death]

viz. (1) Declare unto men, with joy and glorying, that we believe he dyed for *such* purposes and that he hath procured inestimable *benefits* for us by his Death. That therefore we will adhere, and stick unto him; and that neither *death*, nor *life* shall *seperate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord*. And (2) Imports our shewing and declaring *this* also unto God, and pleading it with him for his *pardon*, and his *grace*, for the sake of that meritorious Passion which we set forth, and commemorate. These passages fall under the Account I have before given of the Ordinance, and shew *how* we are to Remember our Lord in it, and *what* we may expect in so doing.

Thus briefly of the *Nature* and *design* of the Sacrament, I might have run the matter into a large Discourse, but I resolve all convenient brevity. In what I have said

said, you will find all things that are *necessary* and *essential* to the *Ordinance*; For the *niceties* and *disputes* that are about it, you need not trouble your selves with them; But so *much* of it as I have represented (I mean in the substance of the particulars) 'tis fit you should know: And therefore I intreat you, especially those of the more ordinary understandings, to return back, and fix your thoughts a while upon those periods, and read them over and again, till you have a *clear*, and *distinct* apprehension of the Subject they explain. I know the thoughts of most are very *confused*, and much in the *dark* about it; and while they are *so*, they cannot demean themselves as they ought in the performance of the Duty, nor receive those benefits that otherwise they might from it. I beseech you therefore not to content your selves with a *single*, and *running* reading; Many Divine Truths will not enter into our minds

minds at *first* sight; or, if they do, they are gone, as soon as they are received: Though they are never so *plainly* exprest, yet they many times *seem dark*, till we look a gain; Or though they strike our minds fully, yet they pass out of Memory, except we reflect, and think them over; I hope therefore you will do your selves this right; And I thus urge you to consideration of my accounts, not as if I fancied I had made any *discoveries* in them, which were not made before (No, *These* are known things among the Intelligent sort of Christians) But I do it, because I speak to the *meaner*, and *less improved* understandings. And perhaps from the Representation of the affair which I have given, the *others* also may receive the advantage of a clearer order, and method to their thoughts, and be deliver'd from many *unnecessary* and *uncertain notions* that they have imagined to be of great consequence to be believed

lieved and known, when either they are not *true*, or not *considerable*.

CHAP. III.

I Come now to the main thing I design, *viz.* (II) To *urge* this great *duty* which I have thus explain'd, and to do what I can to persuade you, to the conscientious practice of it. Now there are two things that commonly oblige men to action, namely Considerations of **Duty** and of **Interest**. And there are *both* here, in the highest degree, to ingage us. I shall discourse of each.

(I) We have the Motive, and Reason of **Duty**, and *Duty* in *such* circumstances, as have the greatest obligation in them. A **Lord**, who hath all *right* to our obedience both by *nature*, and by *dear purchase*,

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chase, hath commanded us to do *this*.
 And, A **Saviour**, who hath
 rescued us from the Jaws of Hell,
 and Earth, and hath procured for
 us endless life and glory, hath re-
 quired it of us. Here is the *Autho-*
rity of just Power, and the *Obliga-*
tion of astonishing Love. We are bound
 by the *submissions* we owe a *Sovereign*
Lord, and by the *gratitude* we owe
 an adorable *Benefactor*. The *Son*
of God, the *King of both the worlds*,
The Redeemer of Men, 'tis *He* that
commands; and his *commandments*
 are not *grievous*; had he put upon
 our necks a yoke heavier then the
Jewish ceremonies, had he injoyn'd
 a greater number of *costly* and *labo-*
rious Rites than those, and requi-
 red so many of such services
 from us, as would have taken
 up *all* our *time*, and imployed *all*
 our *strength*, and wearied *all* our
powers; Yet these we ought to have
 observed without *repining*, and
 thought all but *small* homage to his
 Greatness,

Greatness, and small acknowledgment of his Love. *All these* had been *nothing* in compare with what he hath done for us *freely* without merit, or obligation; *Nothing*, to his leaving the bosome of the Father, and the glories of the upper world, and the Hallelujahs of the blessed; *Nothing*, to his descending to a world of Infamy, and woes, *Nothing* to his suffering the scorns and contradictions of Sinners, the Death of the Cross, and the wrath of God: So that we had been wretchedly ungrateful should we have stuck at any of *these*, or as much as *murmured* at them: But our Lord hath not given us any such tryal of our Love, and obedience; He hath deliver'd the world from the Yoke of Ceremonial bondage, And (besides *Baptism*) hath appointed but *this one* Rite for us to observe; A Rite, that is neither *troublesome*, nor *costly*, *teditious*, nor *laborious*. And what Prodigies of baseness shall we make
our

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our selves, if we refuse to take notice of this his *gracious* Institution? With what face can we look up and call our selves by his name? How shamefully are we upbraided by the practice of *those* we count *barbarous*? Let us look abroad into the world and consider the most *brutish Idolaters*; They will cut their beloved *flesh*, and *burn* their dearest children, and sometimes, suffer themselves to be *crush'd to death* by the Carriages that bear their *Idols*, because their *Infernal* Gods require, and are pleased with such testimonies of their homage. Hath the *Devil* such *obsequious* servants? Are those *Cruel Rites*, which he appoints, observed with so much duty; Will those poor wretches do, and suffer any thing rather than displease their *ugly Deities*? And are *we Christians*; *Professing* Servants of the *Son of God*, our *Sovereign and Redeemer*, and do we neglect *this* his *main, just, and gracious* appointment

Is

Is *this* too much to do for him? and do we owe him so much *less* than *Cannibals* do their *Idols*? Certainly those men of the *Desart*, those *wild Savages* of the Woods shall rise up in *judgement* with such a *Generation* of pretending Christians, and shall condemn it. Methinks *their* diligence and exactness in those hard and painful services, should cover us with blushing and confusion at our carelessness and neglect of the easie duty our Lord requires from us: And we shall see great reason to be ashamed of our omissions, if we consider, that our blessed Redeemer had lived a Life of *poverty* and *dishonour* for our sakes; He had instructed us in the way of Happiness by his excellent *Doctrines* and *Precepts*; and had gone before us in an incomparable *example*; and now he was just about to *compleat* his Love, by *offering* himself unto *death* to deliver us from *it*, and thereby to give an instance of the most amazing goodness that ever was; At

C

this

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this time, he enjoines his Disciples to *do* something in Remembrance of Him. And Lord! *What* is sufficient to be done in *memory* of *such* Love? Had he required the *dearest* of our blood, and the *choicest* of our substance to be offer'd to him in acknowledgment, should we have thought *such* demands *unreasonable*? Would ordinary ingenuity have scrupled to make those Sacrifices for such kindness? But he calls not for *these*. He looks for no *First-born* of our *bodies*, nor *chief* of our *Flocks*; No, He appoints only a *feast* of *Memorials*, and commands us to *remember* his Love in *that*: And shall we not observe him in so small a matter? Hath he not *deserv'd* to be *remembred* by us? or do we know any *better* way, to signify our remembrance of him, then *that* which himself hath prescribed? Should we not do as much as *this*, at the request of an *ordinary* dying Friend? And is not the *greatest*, and the *best* that ever creatures had,

had, worthy of such a testimony of affection from us? I am sure there is no one can be so brutish as to deny the *justness* of the *Duty*, and methinks none should be so unworthy as to refuse compliance with it. I beseech you therefore, if the *Considerations* of *Duty* can do any thing with you; If there be any *obligation* in the highest *Authority*, if there be any *allurement* in the sweetest *love*, If your *profession* of subjection to Christ be not only a *Complement*, and if he have any real interest in your Souls; give this proof then, of your *being* in earnest, *that*, which you would be *thought*, Refuse no more of his *Invitations*; Neglect no more of his *calls*; Consider the *expresness* of his *command*, and that *this* *Law* is *peculiarly his*; *His* in such a sence as (*Baptism* excepted) *no other Law* is. For his *other* *injunctions* are but *enforcements* of the *Laws* that God had written in the old *Scriptures*, and in our hearts; But this is his own

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proper commandment; by obeying him in *this*, we particularly own him as our *Law-giver*, and by refusing we *renounce* him.

But if the *considerations* of *Duty* should not prove so powerful with you; there are *others* which generally use to be of more force, namely *those* taken from our *interest*. And here

(II) I desire you to consider the great *benefits* that a worthy Communicant receives from the holy Sacrament. *This* is not a meer barren Ceremony, or unprofitable Rite, but an instrument and means to produce and to convey unspeakable blessings to us. Here we receive

(I) *Confirmation* of our *Faith*: All habits are increas'd by being exercised, and this Ordinance requires great *exercises* of the grace of Faith: For here we make a *solemn* declaration of it, and thereby bind it stronger upon our souls. And to the exercise of this Divine Grace, and the sincere and publick
pro-

profession of it, there is no doubt but God will superadd his special aid and blessing, that out of *weakness it may be made strong*. So that if your Faith be *weake* and *trembling*, if you are perplext with vexatious doubts, and temptations to unbelief, apply your selves to this holy Ordinance as to the proper remedy. *Declare* your Faith, and *pray* for more. If you *believe*, God will help your *unbelief*, Mark 9. 24.

(2) Our *Repentance* will be heightened by our Due Communicating at the Lords Table, and that in respect of all its great Acts, *viz.* 1. *Sence* and *Sorrow* for Sin; 2. *Confession* of it; and 3. *Aversation* from it. For the First,

(1.) The *evil* of Sin is never so well discerned as in its *effects*. It is *sweet* in the *mouth*, but *bitter* in the *belly*; And there is no greater evidence of its vileness and malignity, then *that* we have in the sufferings of our Lord, which are set before

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us in the Holy Sacrament. And certainly sin must needs be an *accursed* thing (saith the considering Communicant) That the blessed Jesus must thus be made a *Curse* for it; That is doubtless a mighty evil, that cannot be expiated but by the blood of God; And Sin, without question, hath unspeakable malignity in it, since it laid such a load of wrath upon the shoulders of Omnipotence, as made him complain, and sweat, and groan, and die. The good man hath never such a sense of the evil of sin, as when he is awakened by the *signs* and *images* of Christs *Sufferings*, and when he sees it writ in *Characters* of *Blood*. Besides, the *baseness* and *ingratitude* of Sin is made evident in all the representations of the Divine Love, which we have at the Lords Table; We see *there*, that it is an abuse of the greatest, and most tender Goodness; and there is nothing that more affects ingenuous Souls, than the sense of
such

such unworthiness, and this will beget the *liveliest*, and most *kindly* sorrow. *They shall look on me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn.* Zech. 12. 10. The *tenderest* grief ariseth from the apprehension of *abused Goodness*; And the more ingenuous Spirits are sooner brought to be troubled for their sins, by a sence of *Mercy*, than of *Terrors*. Now there is nothing that gives a truer, or greater representation of Divine Grace and Kindness than the Holy Sacrament, and therefore *this* is a very effectual means to beget and increase a *penitential sence*, and sorrow for sin. And upon this

(2) Follows *Confession*, which is one expression of *these*. The apprehension of an Angry Majesty drives a sinner to desperation, and prevents his Confession. When the Lord ask'd the man in the Gospel with some severity, *How camest thou hither, not having a wedding garment*, he was *speechless*.

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Terrors beget stupifying fear, which stops the mouth, and damns up all the passages to and from the soul; whereas the discoveries of goodness and mercy open the heart, and melt the seal upon the lips; They invite Supplications, and beget Confessions; and therefore the *Sacrament*, which is a *memorial* of the greatest, sweetest, and freest mercy, tends in the nature of it to the producing humble confessions and acknowledgements; and it doth it likewise.

(3) As to the *Aversion* of Repentance by the same way. The top and perfection of Repentance, is, to *turn* from our *evil ways*. God invites his People to *this*, by the Argument that is most powerfully press'd upon us in the Sacrament, namely, *That* of his *pardoning mercy* and kindness. *Return thou back-sliding Israel ——— and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you, Jer. 3. 12.* His readiness to pardon is the great motive to return, and the

the *Sacrament* is the *Seal* of the *Covenant* of *Pardon*. Despair of Mercy keeps men on in a sinful course. *Thou sayest there is no hope*, say they in the Prophet *Jerem.* 2. 25. They thought their case desperate, and it follows, *I have loved strangers, and after them will I go*. The Devils persist irreclaimably in their hatred of God and Goodness, because the unalterable Sentence is past upon them; And if men come once to quit their hopes of Happiness, they will also in a short time quit the thoughts of God and Virtue, and give themselves up to the swinge of their Appetites and Inclinations. Whereas on the other side, *Hope* is the great Encouragement and Spring of Endeavour, and where *this* is enlivened by a *full* and *quick* sense of pardoning Goodness, that Soul will feel a *mighty Motive* to reform and turn from sin. Now the *Sacrament* is the *Seal* of *that Covenant* which assures us of Grace, and

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pardon, and the firmest ground of our best hopes, and most glorious expectations. Thus the Grace of *Repentance* receives increase in *all* its *exercises*, from this Divine Institution; and so doth

(3.) That other most excellent Grace, *Love*, both as it relates 1. to God, and 2. to our Neighbour.

(1.) In the Holy Sacrament the Mysteries of Divine Love are unfolded in all their circumstances of wonder. There we see *pardon-
ing, redeeming, bleeding, dying, Love*. Love, suffering for all our sakes; and Love, procuring all things for our interests. Love descending to the Grave, and Hell; and Love triumphing over both; Love leading *Captivity captive*, and obtaining *gifts for men*, Light, Life, and a glorious Immortality. *Such* Love, and Love *beyond* what we can say and *beyond* what we can think, is represented at the *Holy Sacrament*; and *this* must needs fire every soul, that is not as cold
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as the earth, and as dead as the Grave. Love begets Love, and one flame kindles another. And if we think of this Love, and consider it as we ought when we come to the entertainment of Love, this would excite our affections, and turn our Souls into holy flames, and so our *dead* Powers will *live*, and our *dull* sleepy affections will *awake* into new spirit, and vigour. We shall live by Love, and act by Love, till we are received into the nearest embraces of Love, and swallowed up in that immense ocean of Love. Now *Love* is the *best*, and most pleasing of all our *passions*? and *Love to God* is the *best*, and most pleasant of all *Loves*; A *Love* free from those tortures, and disquiets, that shame, and those griefs, that are produced by absence and uncertainties, loss and guilt, when *this passion* is placed upon other objects. This Love is the Fountain of Delight, and the spring of Action; that swee-

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tents our troubles, and stirs up our endeavours, that makes duty agreeable, and difficulties easie, that is a *present* Heaven, and the foretast of a *greater*. This also (2) Tends to the encreasing our Love one to another. It is a *Feast* of Love to our *Fathers House*, and our *Lords Table*; The *Guests* are *Brethren*, and professing *Children of Love*. Here are all the engagements to love set before us; The *Love* of our *Lord*, and his express *Commandment* *Job. 13. 34.* The *Relations* we stand in to God, and to one another. We cannot well choose but *pity* our *Brothers Infirmities*, and *pardon* each others *faults*, when we see how much God hath pityed our *miseries*, and how graciously he hath *pardoned* our *offences*. Our animosities will be abated, and our thoughts of malice and revenge will die. Our Indifferences will be kindness, and our kindness Love; when we consider the inexpressible Love of our
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common Lord, and the blessed effects of that Love; *Reconciliation* made, *Happiness* procur'd, and *Sin*, and *Death*, and *Hell* conquer'd: A sence of *these*, will swallow up all our little picques, and displeasures, and so fill us with the thoughts of Gratitude, and Love; That we shall forget our enmities, and embrace our enemies, and shed abroad our kindness upon all about us, yea and extend it to all the world in *prayers*, and *good wishes*. And now, This *Spirit* of *Charity* is a most *divine temper*, and a great happiness: 'Tis a *sweet*, *serene*, and *pleasant* thing, a reward to it self, if there were no other: Whereas *envy*, and *malice*, and all the degrees of them, are an hell and torment to the Soul, they are great sins and their own punishment; And a right use of the holy Sacrament will abate, and remove *these*, and therein also administer blessed and unspeakable advantages to us.

(4) Our *Hopes* are nobly advanced

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ced, and strengthened by this Ordinance. When the good man considers the *Justice* and *Holiness* of God, and the *perfection* of his *Law*; and then takes a view of his own *sinfulness*, and innumerable *imperfections*; His Spirits fail, and his hope is giving up the Ghost; he sinks into trouble, and *almost* into the regions of despair: Now all the relief that a man can have in such a state, is to be drawn from Gods *Covenant* to *pardon sin*, and to accept of *faith* and *repentance* instead of *perfection*. This is the *Tencour* of the Gospel, and the foundation of our hopes; and *this Covenant* is *sealed* and assured to us at the *Sacrament*; so that *thence* the *fainting* Soul may derive life, and quickning. And when the drooping Christian comes from seeing God putting his *Seal* to his *pardon*, and to the *promises* made him of eternal Life; His hopes recover, and his spirits return unto him; His Soul leaps for joy,
and

and all his powers are full of content, and pleasure: And over and above *this*, God is pleased at *such* times *especially*, to vouchsafe more abundant *manifestations* of *himself* to the Soul, *sealing* his love upon it, and giving it so much assurance as may deliver it from its unreasonable doubts and suspicions, and make it in part partaker of our Masters joy. But this will be a particular by it self. Therefore

(5) The *holy Sacrament* is an excellent means to heighten a Christians Joy and Comfort. For *there* we are in a *special* exercise of our *Graces*, and by *them* are prepared for Divine peace and pleasure, That peace of God which *passeth all understanding*; Phil. 4. 7. and *this* is something more than *that* content that naturally ariseth upon, and results from the Actions of holiness and vertue; and is super-added by the nearer applications of the Spirit of God to the Soul; This pleasure and satisfaction God
is

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is always willing to bestow upon us, but we by our sins indispose our selves for it, and it is not to be given but to *prepared Souls*; And now according to the *greater*, or *less degrees* of our *preparations*, and exercise of our graces, we shall have *more*, or *less* of this spiritual joy, and satisfaction in our Communion. But besides the joy which is *special*, and *extraordinary*, The Ordinance in its own nature tends to *delight* and *pleasure*. We had raised storms, and tempests by our sins, and provoked him whom we can neither resist, nor avoid; His Countenance was full of dread and terrours, and Death and Hell stood ready for the command to seize upon us: And must it not needs fill those with joy and transport, that were just now in this dreadful state, when they shall see the Heavens cleared, and the storms gone; to behold smiles and love in the face of the offended Majesty; to be assured that he is *reconciled*

ciled, and his Arms are open to receive us; That *Hell* and *Death* are destroyed, and *Life* and *Happiness* procured for us? All these are set before us in the holy Sacrament, and did we use it as we ought, our souls would be transported with joy, and we should have a delightful foretaste of the happiness and triumphs of the Blessed; and all our Lives would be *Anthems* of Praise and acclamation to the adorable Author and procurer of our Blessings. And this

(6) Is another happy advantage we derive, or may do, from the holy Sacrament, *viz.* That it heightens and spirits our *Gratitude* and *Praises*. Praise and acknowledgement of Divine favours, are all the return we can make for them; and we are to offer up these Sacrifices for our selves, and all the other creatures: But the commonness of our mercies takes away the sense of them; and we pass them over with *slight* and *customary* acknowledgment.

knowledgements ; This ordinarily
 is our course, and 'tis a very disin-
 genuous and ungrateful carriage to
 the bountiful Author of our beings,
 and blessings : But now at the Ho-
 ly Sacrament, *Divine favours* are
particularly and *solemnly* represen-
 ted, our remembrance awakened,
 and our affections excited ; and
 the devout Soul pours it self forth
 into holy Eucharist, and thanks-
 giving. The *heart* is *full*, and the
mouth flows : All the powers rejoyce,
 and rejoycing breaks forth into
 Songs of Praise : And so *begin* that
 blessed imployment, which shall be
 the work and happiness of Hea-
 ven.

Thus we shall receive increase
 to our *Graces*, and our *Comforts*,
 from the frequent, and due use of
 the *Holy Sacrament*, and all *other*
spiritual advantages are contain d
 under *these*. And as *by* these par-
 ticulars we may *incourage* our selves
 to our duty, so *in* them likewise
 we may see how we are to *demean*
 our

our selves in the discharge of it : *what acts* we are to exercise, and by *what considerations* we may stir up our *graces*, inflame our *affections*, and strengthen our *resolutions*.

And now the *Benefits* that I have represented to incourage and invite you to the *holy Sacrament* do not only concern the *thorough*, and *grown Christian*, but even *all* that own the profession of Christs Religion, and have not renounc'd their *baptismal ingagements* by *leudness*, and *impiety*; For such have *some degrees* of *Faith*, *Love*, *Repentance*, and other virtues; But the unhappiness is, that *these*, in the most, are very low, imperfect and in a degree that will not secure their condition: *These* *graces* must be advanced to *nobler measures*, and to *such degrees*, as may prevail over the *contrary habits*, and *dispositions*; Till the matter comes to *this*, we are under the *Law* and a *spirit of bondage*; in a condition of *impotency*

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tency and weakness, and not arrived to the glorious Liberty and Power of the Sons of God: This, all that profess the Christian Faith and Hopes, ought to aim at, and endeavour after; and the Sacrament is the most proper and likely means for the advancing of our imperfect Graces to that noble height. So that all professing Christians are concerned in the duty, and capable of the benefits. And to all those that have such thoughts, and such desires, the Considerations I have presented will be of moment. But for the rest that are careless and unconcerned, dead to such spiritual Motives, and stupidly careless of the duty, and the privileges that attend it; They are not Christians, but do as much as in them lies, to renounce their Religion, and to put themselves into the condition of Heathens and professed Infidels. This is that I come next to discourse.

After all my persuasions, and most earnest endeavours, I have
 too

too much cause to think that some among you neglect the holy Ordinance not for any *reason* that they have, or can as much as *pretend*; but from meer *brutish stupidity* and *unconcernment*. They *care not for these things*. The *motives of Religion*, and another world can do *nothing* with them; *such considerations* are not *felt*, but past over their Souls without making any impressions on them. And now, as for *such*, I come to shew, That they *disclaim Christ*, and his *Religion*, and are by no means to be reckoned into the number of *Christians*. This I prove by the following particulars.

First, They renounce a main Article of the *Creed*, viz. The *Communion* of Saints, their *Communion* with (1) *Christ*, and their *Communion* with (2) *one another*. (1) *Christ* invites us to his Table, and prepares a spiritual entertainment for us; and in *that* there is a *solemn* and *special* inter-

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intercourse between *him*, and his Church; which on *our part* consists in the *exercise* of our *Graces*; and on *his*, in the *benefits*, and *blessings* he bestows. He invites us to come and to meet him *there* to injoy spiritual correspondence, and communion with him: And now, *wilfully* to refuse the invitation, is to signify our *contempt* of the holy Jesus, and so declare that we care not for any nearness of correspondence with him. And such neglectors in effect say, that they love the converse and communion of their vain, and vitious company; That they can spend their time *pleasantly* in *their* conversation, upon an Ale bench, or place of idleness, or debauches: But for *Christ Jesus* they like not *his* company, and care not for any intimacy of acquaintance with him. This is the direct language of such practices, and neglects, and what kind of *Christians* are *such as these*?
(2) They renounce the Communi-

on of *Saints one among another*. The holy *Sacrament* is the *Feast of Charity*, and *Christian Love*, and there our affections are united to God, and to our brethren. There we profess to be of *one Body*, *one Society*, and to be all *members one of another*. So that those who neglect and refuse this holy *Symbol of Love*; break off from the *Society of Christians*, and declare they will have nothing to do with them, as far as they are concerned in that name, and relation: That they will not be of the flock, and number that Christ calls *his*; but would rather have their lot with the world, and herd of mankind, who are strangers to the *Covenant of Promise*, without hope, and without God in the world. Eph. 2. 12. That they value not *their priviledges*, nor care for their *hopes*. This is the meaning of their neglect, and such Christians are the wilful refusers.

(2) They renounce their *Baptism*.

This

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This is the Sacrament of entrance into *Christianity*, and here *engagements* are laid upon us *without* our knowledge or consent. At the Sacrament of the Lords Supper we *solemnly engage*, and take those *obligations* upon our *selves*. If we refuse to do *this*, we *withdraw* our *consent* from what was done in our stead; we make our *Baptisme* void, and put our selves into the state of Infidels and Heathens. The *Indians* were by the *Spaniards* driven to Baptism in droves, like Cattel to the water, without knowing what it meant, or what they did in it: were *these* Christians by virtue of such a Baptism? Especially, is there any reason to think *those* of them such, who as soon as they were free, made open declarations against it. And are *those* among us *Christians*, who were *signed* with that *Religion* when they could not *help* it? and *profess* against it by their actions and neglects, as soon as they are in *capacity*

to do it? who *disown* it, when they are *solemnly* called to put their *seal*, and to declare their allowance and approbation? Their *sureties* ingaged for them that they should *believe* the *Christian Faith*; *keep* God's *Commandments*, and *renounce* the *World*, the *Flesh* and the *Devil*: But say *these* by their *practise*, what had *they* to do to undertake such things for us; we will stand to no such ingagements: we are call'd on to make this good our selves in person at the other Sacrament, or by our neglects to declare it void: but we will not tie our selves, or own any such ingagements on us; we will leave our selves at large to believe what we please, and to practise what we phancy, and to gratifie and worship, as long as we think fit, the *World*, the *Devil*, and the *Flesh*, our friends, and dearest correspondents. All this likewise is plainly signified in the neglect of the holy Sacrament; and therefore certainly such are no better

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Christians than the wild men of *America* : which will further appear if we consider.

(3.) That by it they deny the very profession of Christ Jesus; They will not as much as claim, nor pretend to him, in any solemn, significant way. To say that we are Christians, and now and then to hear a Sermon, these are not profession enough: They are but cold declarations of our opinion; no good significations of our Faith. The right profession of Christianity is made, by our presenting our selves at the Lords Table, and owning our Faith there; that is a solemn and publique confession and acknowledgement. To hear Sermons is too often but curiosity or custom; to say we are of the Christian Religion, is but a declaring in what way we have been brought up; and meer education-Faith is but a faint, unsignifying thing; It is but opinion and a low degree of assent. 'Tis true, a man may be a Formalist and an Hypocrite

Hypocrite when he comes to the Lords Table, as well as in other lower significations of his Religion. But however, he makes a *profession*, and *that* which is *proper* and *solemn*: whereas the *wilfully negligent* refuse to make any due confession of Christ and his Religion. They openly deny him before men, and such he will deny before his Father which is in heaven, Mat. 10. 33. To withdraw from the profession of Christianity in times of difficulty and persecution is a great sin; but 'tis such a one as admits of some extenuation from the frailty of human nature, and the temptations of fear and self love; But to deny the profession of Christ in times of Liberty and encouragement, this is an affront to the Holy Jesus, for which there is no shadow of excuse, and must arise from contempt, and a confessed neglect of him. Such persons publish to the world, that they own nothing of Religion; but count it a disparagement to be thought

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any way concern'd for it. And so are by no means to be accounted Christians. Further,

(4.) Their refusal and neglect is a quitting and renouncing the *whole Covenant* that God hath made with sinners in his Son. The *Covenant* on *Gods part* offers *Grace and Glory*; and on *ours*, it binds to *Faith and sincere obedience*. We are called to the *Sacrament* to see God *confirming* what he hath promised, and assuring us to make good what concerns *him*: On the other side, we are to present our selves *there*, to profess our readiness and resolution, to perform *our part*, to keep the terms to which we are ingaged, and upon which we expect the promised blessings. Now if we wilfully refuse this *Confirmation*, we withdraw our selves from the *Covenant*, and declare that *Grace and Glory* are things that we neither *care for* nor *expect*; and that we will not tie our selves to any *faith or homage*; but would be as free as

we

we can, to follow the *Devil* and our *Lusts*: and so are far off from being *Christians*.

CHAP. IV.

I Have thus briefly shewn you what is *signified* and *implied* in the *neglect* of the *Holy Sacrament*. Many of you that are guilty of *this* sin, would I supposed be loath *openly*, and in *words*, to *renounce* Christ and his Religion, and yet while you continue in this obstinate, dangerous neglect, you *do it*, as *fully* as if your tongues declared against that name and profession. And I think when any such as *these* turn *Papists*, *Turks*, or *Jews*, they do but change to *some* shew of Religion, from *none* at all. So that it is no *real* disparagement, or loss to our Church, when those Infidels declare in *words*, what before they sufficiently signified by their *pract*

Ellice. They go out from us, because they were never of us, 1 John 2. 19. They do not change their Religion, for they had never any before which they might exchange.

This, Sirs, in serious truth, is the condition of those that wilfully refuse, and neglect the Duty of Holy Communion: And me thinks it should make such tremble to consider, that they live in a profest and impudent contempt of God. You pity Heathens, and ignorant Americans; but there is work enough for your pity at home, and their condition certainly is not worse, than the condition of those careless negligent sinners among our selves. Yea, the Apostle tells us, That 'tis better never to have known the way of truth, than after we have known it to turn away from the Holy Commandment, 2 Pet. 2. 21. and our Saviour saith, It shall be more tolerable for the dark Tyre and Sidon, at judgment, than for the inlightned Capernaum and Bethsaida, Matt. 11. 22.

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We think *their* condition dreadful that say, *there is no God*, and no doubt it is *so*: And certainly *their* state is not *less* deplorable, That acknowledge *there is a God*, but *despise* him, and carry the matter *so*, as if in good earnest there were *no such being*. To live at large without the serious profession of *some Religion*, is *brutish*, and *unnatural*; And those *Savages* that do *so*, deserve not to continue in the societies of *men*, but are fitter to range among the wild beasts of the woods. And *such* are those among us, that never make any solemn profession of *any Religion*, by *any act* of their *own*. They have *no Religion*, but *that* of their *Climate*, which they neither understand, nor mind; they are *Christians* by the *Christianity* of others (*viz.* the *general profession* of their *Country*) or they are *none* at all; and if they live and die in *this* condition, *wild men* and *Cannibals* will at the last be in a *better* state than *they*.

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And now, Sirs, *Reason* for this carelessness and dangerous neglect, I am sure you have none; Nor do the sort I am now dealing with, pretend *Scruples* of *Conscience*; But yet some *Excuses* there are, which you know are but *vain*, that you use upon occasion to take off the edge of reproof; and to seem to justify your selves by them in the sight of men.

Thus they that were invited to the Supper in the Parable, *Luke 14. 18.* made *excuses*; One had bought ground, and he must see it; a second, had bought Oxen, and he must try them; and a third, had married a Wife, and could not come. None of these pretences had any good reason in them; they were something to say, and had a little colour, but they were not the causes of their not coming to the Supper; No, the true ground was their contempt of the Master, and his Invitation: and therefore *Matt. 22. 3.* 'tis said, They would not come; Their

to the Lords Supper.

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Their excuses were looked on, as *flat denyals*, and the reason is given after: It was not their *Ground*, nor their *Oxen*, nor their *Marriage*; but their *disesteem* of the Lord, and his Feast, *They made light of it, v. 5.* But though these excuses were not good, yet they had something *specious* in them: 'Twas *business*, and *considerable* occasions that were alledg'd: and *such* affairs they really had, for 'tis said in St. Matthew, that *they went their way, one to his Farm, and another to his Merchandise*; so that there was something true in their *pleas*, though the main thing for which they were brought was false. But now, if they had sent word, that the *Lord's house* was so far off, that they were not able to go to it, though really it were within some few furlongs of their remotest dwellings, and not farther than the *Markets*, which they constantly frequented: There had been more folly in this excuse. If they had said, that there was not room for

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them all in the *Lord's House*, when they knew, that it was never *full* on *such* occasions, and that a great part of those that were invited, would not come, so that they were sure to find too many empty places; the excuse would have been interpreted as a *mockery*, and a *scoff* at the invitation. If they had told the Messengers, that they would not come, except they had each of them a *Chair* and *Cushion* provided for him, and might sit in *state* and *ease* at the Entertainment, this had been *greater* arrogance than appears in *those* Refusers. If they had sent the Lord word, that they would not feast with him, at *such*, or *such* of his Houses, that were *appointed*, and were most *convenient* for their reception; but they would have it *here*, or *there*; at *home*, and *next* door; in places much less fit: *This* would have been a very *humbersome* and very *rude* answer to the Invitation. If further they had said,
that

that the Feast began too soon, and that they could not rise so early, though the Sun was up many hours before, and they were abroad every day earlier about their other business; This also had been an affront to the Master, and a contempt to his kindness. But if these surly, unworthy people should have been humour'd in all particulars, and things should have been so managed, as to have avoided all these pretences: And yet if after such condescension they should have refused, they had confused themselves, and given the lye to their excuses: But, if notwithstanding all this, they should have cried out that they were perishing for want of bread; and clamour'd, and complain'd heavily that provision was not made for them; what could have been said to such an impudent, brazen'd sort of Hypocrites?

Sirs, there are some among you that understand what I mean: I speak not thus out of ill will to upbraid;

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upbraid any of you, but I ought to *mind* you, and to endeavour to *convince* you of your sins. What ever *colours* the *guilty* may set upon their neglects, and contempts of *Holy Ordinances*, before *men*, *God* will not be *deceiv'd*, or *mock'd*; there is no putting *tricks* upon him. If you *will* not be *perswaded* to your duty, he *knows* the *reason*, and 'tis in *vain* to make *false flourishes*, and *excuses*. Yea, some mens *pretences* are so *openly untrue*, and *gross*, that they cannot as much as hope to *deceive men* by them. Every one *sees* the *falsehood*, and *lying* of their *allegations*; all their *actions* *proclaim* that they do not themselves *believe*, or *mean* any thing that they *say*; and yet they have the *prodigious impudence* to *lye* on in the face of *God*, and *conscience*, and *men*. So *fear'd*, and *hardned* are some in their *perversness* and *hypocrisie*, and act at that rate, as if it were a *play-game*, and *sport* of wit to show how many *ways* they had

to.

to evade their duty, with some *show* of reason. Sirs, when this *vile sort* of evil men have the forehead to pretend Religion, they become the most *mischievous miscreants* upon earth; and the *fittest* Instruments that Sathan can desire or use for the affairs of his Kingdom. But no more of them now.

Friends, I am exceeding troubled to see how *undutifull* to God, and how *unkind* to themselves, how *foolish* and *unreasonable* many men are, when they seek for *little occasions* to pretend, as *reasons* against the *greatest* and most *important* Duties; when *that* which would *excuse* nothing else, shall *excuse* them unto God for a neglect of his worship, in the *greatest* Instances of it: An *aching* finger, a few Drops of rain, the *cold* Air, a Fit of Drowsiness, an impertinent visit, or *such* like trifles, are enough to be pleaded for *absence* from the House of God, and Holy Communion with him. My wife was not at home, or she
was

was busie, 'my Childs head aked,
 or I had friends to dine with me,
 therefore I *could not* be at the Sa-
 craments. Therefore I *could not* !
 For shame false man ! offer *such*
 excuses to thy Master, or thy Prince,
 when he commands, and expects
 thine attendance, see how he will
 take them from thee : yea offer *such*
 but to thine *equal*, that waits for
 thee on affairs of moment, and try
 how kindly he will receive the
 disappointment on such grounds.
 Dost thou use to say, I *could not*
 go out to *market* to buy necessa-
 ries, because 'twas *cold weather* ;
 I *could not* go to *Dinner* to my
 kind Neighbour next door, that in-
 vited me, because I had a *corn* upon
 my great Toe ? Are such pretences
 too *trifling* to be used on such *or-*
dinary occasions, and are they
 enough for the *greatest* ? will they
 serve to excuse thy neglect of
 feeding thy soul with the bread of
 life, and thy making provision for
 eternity ? Will they answer for
 thy

to the Lords Supper.

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thy not waiting on thy Lord, the Lord of Life and Glory, when he invited thee to the Feast of Love, at the House of Banquets? What thoughts hast thou of the *privileges* of the Gospel, the *Communion* of Saints, the *peace* of Conscience, the *joyes* of the Holy Ghost, the *foretastes* of Glory; what, I say, dost thou think of *these*, if they have not so much power with thee as the most *acknowledged* trifles? With how much *less* respect and devotion dost thou *serve* God, than wicked men do the Devil and their Lusts? When they invite to jolly meetings and communion in debauchery and *bestial* madness, do the *Blades* use to make *such* excuses? Are they diverted and kept off from their *brutish* satisfactions by *such* Nothings? certainly they could not so excuse themselves to their *lusts* and *vile* Companions. And do you pretend to be worshippers of the God of Heaven, and worshippers of the best and purest sort, to be Christians,

stians, and expectants of *eternal glories* as *rewards* of your services; and do you *thus* serve your Maker; *now* and *then* when the humour takes you, when the *Devil* hath *no business* for you, and you have *nothing else* to do? Are you not ashamed to confess that *Religion* hath so *little* power with you, and that every thing can *do more* with you, than your *duty* to *God*, and the interest of your souls? Do you *thus* work out your salvation? Do you *thus* seek a *Kingdom*, a *heavenly Kingdom*, an *everlasting Kingdom*? Is *this* the *work* and *patience* of the *Gospel*? Is *this* *running*, and *striving*, and *fighting*, and *giving diligence*? Is *this* *cutting off* *right hands*, and *plucking out* *right eyes*? Is *this* *forsaking all* and *following Christ*? If there be any *reason*, if there be any *shame*, if there be any *Conscience*, if there be any *sense* of *God* and *Religion* in you, let not *small matters* keep you from *this* your greatest duty and concern;

Make

Make no more *such vain and self-condemning Apologies*. I know not whether it were not better for you once for all, to say you are *no Christians*; than to insist on such *shameless pretensions* for your neglects of *Christ* and his appointments. I add no more on this head now; I pray God you may lay to heart what I have said.

CHAP. V.

I Pass now to discourse with the other sort of *Refusers*, viz.

(2) *Those that stand off upon the score of mistakes of Conscience*. In applying my self to them, I shall consider the most weighty *objections* that carry any colour of conscience with them. And though I know many pretend *scruples* of this sort, when in earnest they are not the reasons of their neglects; yet because they are so to some, I shall take them to

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to account. They are of two sorts,

(1) Such as hinder men only *sometimes*, and in *part*.

(2) Such as *wholly* obstruct their *Communion*, and are pretended as grounds, why they cannot partake with us at *any* time.

Of the *first* kind are *these* that follow; *viz.*

(I) We hear sometimes, [*I would not have neglected the holy Sacrament, but I was not in charity; such, or such a person hath abused me, and I was at odds with him; so that I durst not come.*]

To this I say, That in *such* an occasion, thou art *seriously*, and *impartially* to consider, whether thy displeasure were *just*, or *unjust*; upon the determining of *this* will depend the state of the case If

(1) Thy displeasure were *just*, and thy Neighbour hath done thee *wrong*, and *persists* in it without *repentance*, or *reparation*; 'tis no *uncharitableness* to be *out* with him,

or

or think amiss of him. In such a case, thy *anger* is no *sin*, so long as it keeps it self within just bounds. Be angry, and *sin* not, saith the Apostle, Eph. 4. 26. they may be parted And what is no *sin* cannot unfit us for the holy Communion. For that Ordinance doth not oblige us to be reconfidered in our thoughts to wicked, and injurious men, while they impenitently continue such: It will indeed require us not to revenge our selves on them, to do them wrong, or to desire their *ruine*, or as much as *hurt*; but not to have kind and good thoughts of them while they continue obstinate in their *sins*, and *injustice*: otherwise it were in the power of every wicked person to hinder the good man from the Sacrament, when he pleased. On such an occasion (I say) we may be innocently angry, and not only pity the injurious man, which many times is but a proud, though more plausible word to disguise anger by. And the man that is but thus justly displeased

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pleased with an offender against God, and himself, is not *indisposed* for the *Sacrament* thereby. If this be your case at any time, you ought not to permit the injury of another to do you *so much more*, as to keep you from your attendance on Christ at his *Feast of Love*.

But (2) If upon *examination* you have found, that your *anger*, and displeasure was *unjust*; then the *sin*, and the *wrong* was on your part, and you ought to *repent* of it, and *resolve* against it, as a *preparation* for the holy *Sacrament*. And if you *do so*, the *Sacrament* will be a *proper means* to your end? There you will find *considerations*, and *helps* for the *cooling* of the *heats* of your *passion*; and for the allaying the *boylings* of your *rage*, and *animosity*: I say, if you are convinced in your conscience, that your *wrath* is *undeserved*, you ought to *repent*, and if you *do so*, you ought to use the *Holy Sacrament* for the *confirmation* of your *repentance*.

So

So that the scruple of *not* being in *charity* cannot justly keep any from the Sacrament, but *those* that know they hate their brother without a cause, and are resolv'd to persist in that hatred; *such* as will not be reconciled to one that hath done them wrong, though he *repents*, and endeavours reparation: And *such*, in effect, *renounce* Christ, and declare that they expect no benefit from his *merit*, or *mediation* for the obtaining *pardon* for themselves. If this be your condition, you may well be *afraid* to come to the Holy Sacrament; and you may as well tremble to pray, *Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.* For this is directly *praying* against yourselves. I hope it is not *thus* with any of you that make this exception.

But your neighbour you think is an *evil* man, hath done you *injury*, and not *askt* your *pardon*, or sought your *amends*; you are therefore

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fore displeased with him, and feel much anger in your mind against him; but yet are very ready to forgive him upon his acknowledgements and desire of forgiveness. If it be after *this* manner with you, you ought not to *abstain* from the Sacrament for *this* reason; but rather to address your selves to it, to provide and pray that your just anger may not grow into malice and rage; that you may not be provoked to repay your enemy one injury for another, but that by the due use of those holy mysteries you may be more inclined to forgiveness, when he shall be fit for it. This I think is sufficient for *that* doubt.

(II) Some plead; [*I have so much business fallen upon me, that I have not time to prepare my self, and therefore I cannot come*]

In Answer to this, I shall say something that concerns ¹ Business, and something ² that concerns Preparation.

(1) As to Business. Doth your
Business

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Business afford you time to eat, and drink, and sleep, and none to fit your souls for *spiritual* entertainments, and converse with God?

(2) Have you any greater, have you any better business, than to prepare your selves to remember the Love of your dear Lord, to meet with him, to renew your Covenant with God, and to receive pledges of his pardon, and his love? Do you not reckon, that *this* is business; and the most important and necessary business; and shall the greater matters give place to the less?

(3) Is not much of the business that binders, needless? have you not voluntarily involv'd your self in more affairs than it was necessary you should, or than your state or station in the world requir'd? might not some of it have been put off to some other time; or might not the time that you spend in impertinencies be employed in some of that business?

Ask

Ask your Consciences these questions ; and know, that what ever business you take upon you *more* than is consistent with your duty to God, and to your souls, *that business is your sin.* But if your business were not *voluntary*, but thrown on you by *Providence* ; the *doing* such *necessary* business is *Gods work* ; and while you do it in his *fear*, and with an eye to his *glory*, you are doing somewhat that is a *preparation* for the Holy Sacrament, or at least *that* which doth not by any means *in-dispose* you for it. And hence I pass to the Answers that concern

II. Preparation. As to this take these two things.

(1) There are *Preparations* required to *Prayer* and *Hearing* , as well as to the *Sacrament* ; *Meditation* is the Preparation for *Prayer*, and *Prayer* the Preparation for *Hearing* ; and I hope that notwithstanding your business you perform *these* duties : If *not*, you are to *repent* speedily of your neglect, and

and to take the *first* opportunity of the Sacrament, *there* to *confess* your *sin*, to declare your *repentance* and *resolutions* of *amendment*; to beg *pardon* for what you have *omitted*, and *grace* to *assist* you in what you *resolve*. But if you *have perform'd those holy services*, then I say,

(2) That *those performances* joyned with *faith* and *repentance* are *preparations* for the Holy Communion. For when we *hear*, and when we *pray*, we do the *same* thing that we do at the Sacrament, though *not* with *that solemnity*; we *remember* Christ when we *hear*, and we do the *same*, and renew our *Covenant* with God when we *pray*, (in which two I have told you the nature of the Ordinance consists;) so that these acts are *dispositions* and *preparations* for *that* which is the more *solemn* performance. A *good life* in the discharge of our duties towards God and man, is an *habitual* and *constant* preparation for the Sacrament; and a true Christian

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is alwayes *ready* and *prepared* to remember *Christ*, and to *confirm* the *Covenant* whereby he is a Christian. It is indeed very fit, that we should take some time before we approach the *Lords Table*, to call together into our thoughts the several great instances of the love of our dear Saviour, which we are to remember *there*; what *particular sins* we have to *confess*; and to *resolve* and *covenant* against; what *graces* we *want*; and are more especially to *implore*. These things we should do, but they are not works that will require much labour or time, if we have been constant in the other *preparatory* duties of *Meditation*, *Prayer*, and *Hearing*; for they do *habituate* such thoughts and resolutions to the souls of good men. But if thy case be *such*, that thou hast been an *evil* man, and *negligent* of all spiritual duty; but art now *sensible* of thy sin, and *desirous* to *reform*; *that sense* and *those desires* of amendment (if they are *sincere*, and if thou
under-

understandest the *nature* of the *Sacrament*, and Gods *Covenant* that is sealed by it) are thy *preparations*. The *more time* thou takest, and the *more prayers* and *thoughts* thou imployest with other means, to make the *sense* of sin *deep*, and the *desires* of reformation *intense* and *great*; the *more* thou art *prepared*, and the better things are like to succeed with thee: But if thy *preparations* are of a *lower*, and more imperfect degree, (if of the *true* kind) thou oughtest *not therefore* to *abstain*; God will *pardon* thy *infirmities*, and *accept* of thy *sincerity*, and *strengthen* thee *so*, that thou shalt be *better prepared* against *another opportunity*, if thou art not wanting to thy self. But as to *this*, I may have occasion to speak more under the next Head, to which I now come:

Viz. (II) To consider the *Scruples* of *Conscience*, that keep some off *wholly* from *publick Communion*. They are either of *such* as refrain, because (1) they think *themselves*

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unworthy, or (2) of those that do it because they think *others unworthy*, or (3) of such as refuse on the opinion, that the *way of administration* is *unworthy*. Most of the considerable and usual doubts will fall under one or other of *these*. I begin with those of the *first* sort.

(1) We would come to the Holy Communion, but alas we are not *worthy* of so great an honour and privilege; and we are afraid to come, because we hear that *he that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks his own damnation.*]

To *this*, proposed thus in the general, I answer (1) we are also *unworthy* of *common* mercies, of *meat* and *drink* and *raiment*; and of the more usual *spiritual* mercies, that God should *speak* unto us, or that *we* should be permitted to *speak* unto *him*; shall we therefore *starve* our selves, and go *naked*? shall we therefore refuse to *hear*, and *pray*? In the *Sacrament* there is *something* of *duty*, and *something* of

of *priviledge*; when we are commanded to do a duty *reasonable* and *just*, shall we refuse because we are *unworthy*? when we are invited unto a benefit *great* and *free*, and *necessary*, shall we resist it because we are not *worthy*? To do thus is to render our selves *more undeserving*. When God offers favors, we *may* and *ought* to accept, though we are unworthy of them.

(2) All men are unworthy in the sense of the Law. *Every man in his best estate is altogether vanity*, Psalm 39. 5. *We are all an unclean thing, and our righteousness is as filthy rags*, Isa. 64. 6. The meaning is, all men are *sinners*, and their *best services* are *imperfect* and *polluted*. There is none *righteous*, no not one, according to the strictness and severity of the Law, which require unsinning obedience. *This unworthiness* then is *not a reason* why thou shouldst refrain; yea

(3) If thou art *sensible* of this thine *unworthiness*, and desirous to

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be made *more worthy*, thou oughtest for *that reason* to come. 'Tis *such* that Christ invites: *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest*, Matth. 11. 28. *He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance*, Matth. 9. 13. *Ho every man that thirsteth, come---* Isa. 55. 1. *The Spirit and the Bride say come, and let him that is athirst come,---* Rev. 22. 17. *Sense of spiritual wants, and desire of spiritual supplies, is part of Gospel-worthiness; and that which gives a right to the Sacrament.* Thy being an *unworthy* sinner, is not a reason why thou shouldst refrain, except thou art *obstinately resolv'd to continue so*. The Beggar is never the more *unworthy* of an *alms*, because he is in *rags*, and great *misery*; nor the *sick man* the more *unworthy* of the *care and pains* of a *Physician*, because his *disease* is *great and violent* upon him. If indeed the Beggar *loves and chooseth want*, and *scorns charity*; if the *Patient hates and resists*

sists the Physician and his applications; in such a case the one is unworthy of relief, and the other of the means of health. If this be thy case in spirituals, thou art unworthy; and till thou art of another temper, I would not perswade thy coming. But if on the other hand, thou art sensible of thy sins, and desirous of pardon and grace to reform, thou hast the qualification that renders thee one that may and ought to come: and thou art worthy, as a Beggar is of an alms, or the Sick of physick; that is, thou wantest it, and Christ invites thee to come, to receive supplies sutable to thy wants. So that if it be thus with thee, the sentence of the Apostle pronounced on him that eats and drinks unworthily will not concern thee.

But the doubter presseth the matter more particularly; Knowledge, Faith, and Repentance are necessary to this worthiness: But I have no knowledge; I cannot believe, I cannot repent; and therefore am

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not worthy.]

I shall speak to these *distinctly*, and apart.

As to what concerns (1) *Knowledge*, I propose *these* things.

(1) Perhaps thou art mistaken in the *degrees* of *Knowledge* that are necessary. It is *not necessary* that thou shouldst have knowledge in *deep* and *controversal* points, no, nor yet in many *doctrinal* opinions about *Religion*, that are *less speculative*, and *nice*: It is not necessary that thou shouldst be acquainted with the *disputed* matters about the *Sacrament*, or be able to discourse largely upon the subject. No, *Necessary knowledge is in few things*, and *those practical*. If therefore thou art instructed in the main *plain* points of *Christian Doctrine*, and in the *great rules* of *Christian Life*; if thou understandest the *Sacrament* to be a *Remembrance* of *Christ*, and a *confirming* our *Covenant* with *God*; and knowest those *easy* things I have before set down about

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about it: There is no reason then why thou shouldst plead *ignorance* in barr to thy *duty* and *priviledge*. But

(2) If thou art *really ignorant* in those *plain* things, thy *ignorance* is *inexcusable*; 'tis a great *sin*, and an argument of *prodigious carelessness* and *neglect*. For no one can *want capacity* to know things so *easy*, and no one can *want opportunity* to know things so *common*, and no one can plead *excuse* for not endeavoring to know things so *necessary*. If *this* then be thy case, repent of thy stupidity and carelessness that occasioned thy ignorance, and apply thy self presently to thy *spiritual Guide*, or some honest knowing Neighbor to instruct thee in those great and necessary matters. Be afraid and ashamed to live a day longer in such dangerous darkness amidst so much clear light: And till thou hast got out of this state of wilful blindness, meddle not with holy mysteries. But *this*,

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I hope, is the condition but of very few of you; Those that make the objection are mostly such as do it upon the *former* mistake, which I have endeavored to rectify.

(II) Want of **Faith** is pleaded. And to this scruple I say,

(I) Perhaps thou art *out*, and hast been *mis-taught* in the Doctrine of *Faith*. It may be thou takest *Faith* to be an assurance of salvation; or supposest that it requires thy assent to many Principles, and such as are *unreasonable*, or *doubtful*; or perhaps thy mind hath been confounded by *phrases*, and *various*, *metaphorical*, and *dark* representations of *Faith*; so that thou dost not as much as know *what it is*, or *wherein it consists*. These all have been, and often are the cases of many well-disposed Christians. The good man is not absolutely *assured* of his salvation; or he *doubts* sometimes of many *doctrines* and *opinions* that he hath been taught to believe as *Fundamentals*,

mentals, or his understanding is *confused* by variety of *odd* notions; and therefore he thinks he hath *not Faith*, and dares not approach the *Holy Table*. If any of these be thy condition, rectifie thy thoughts; and thou wilt be rid of thy vain fears: Consider the matter *freely*; look on it in the light of *Scripture* and *Reason*, and thou wilt finde, that *those conceits* about *Faith* were *groundless*. Lay this down for certain, that *the plainest and most obvious account of it is truest*; For God would not make *that* the great condition of the Gospel, which is *difficult* to understand.

Now the *plain, scriptural, rational* Notion is *this*, *Faith* in the *general* is the *belief* of a *Proposition affirmed*; *Divine Faith*, the belief of something upon a *Divine Testimony*; *Gospel-saving Faith* is *such a belief* of *Divine Testimony*, as hath influence upon the *heart* and *practice*, and conforms them unto it. If now we believe *other Testimonies*, but not *that*.

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that which God hath given us *by*, and of his *Son*, our *Faith* is meerly *humane*, and we have nothing to do with the *holy* Sacrament. If we *believe* the Revelations of God in the *Gospel*, but *that* belief hath not yet had *such* power upon our *affections* and *conversations* as it ought, and as we desire: In *this* case we *may*, and 'tis our *duty*, to come to the Lords Table, to profess *that* degree of *Faith* which we *have*, and to *pray* for *more*; that it may be made *so* strong and *lively*, as to *transform* our hearts, and all our powers into the *likeness* of it, and into *his* *likeness* who is the *Author* and *finisher* of our *Faith*. And finally, if our *faith* hath *already* had *this* effect upon us, we are to come to the Sacrament for *further* *confirmation* of it. This is the short and plain account of the matter; and if I should run it out into further discourse, this part would be disproportioned to the rest. If my brevity leave any of you unsatisfied

fied in *this*, or any other thing belonging to my subject, I am at hand, willing and ready to give you further satisfaction. But

(2) It may be the *weakness* and *imperfection* of thy Faith makes thee think thou hast *none*. In this case ask thy self the question. Do I think that Christ *Jesus* was an *Impostor*, and that the *Gospel* is a *Fable*? Thou *startlest* and *abhorrest* these thoughts: Hence thou mayst be assured that thou hast *some degree* of Faith. But *that* (it may be) is very *small* and *low*: Be *that* the case; Ask thy self then again, whether thou hast any *desire* that thy *weak* Faith should be *strengthened*, and thy *imperfect* Faith should be *improved* to greater and nobler measures? If thou art a person fit to be dealt with under this Head of *Conscience*, it is *thus* with thee; thou art *sorry* for *this imperfection*, and *desirous* of *growth* and *improvement*: And if *so*, apply thy self to the Holy Sacrament, as to the

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the *proper means* of growth, and *remedy* of thy *imperfections*. Here thy Faith will be *exercised*, and by exercise it will be felt; so that thy doubts, whether thou hast any or no, will be cleared off, experience will assure thee. And how thy Faith will by the use of this Ordinance be quickened and advanced, I have shewn already. Thus to the Objection from the supposed want of Faith. But

(III) The good man thinks that he wants **Repentance** too: He cannot *repent* he saith, and therefore is not *worthy*. In answer, I take notice that

In Repentance two things are considerable, *viz.* 1. *Sorrow* for sin, and 2. *Turning* from it to a life of Holiness and Virtue.

(1) It may be thy *sorrow* is not so *intense* and *great* as thou thinkst is fit and futable to such an occasion: Thou canst not weep and grieve *so much* for thy sin as the evils of it requires, and yet thou
mayst

mayst not wholly want the grace of Repentance. *All* indeed are *sinners*, and *all* must *repent*: But men are *sinners* in *different* measures, and degrees of guilt; and their sorrow and humiliations will likewise be *different*. Deeper Convictions and greater agonies and pangs of sorrow may be expected from them whose sins have been *capital* and *notorious*, than from those others whose lives have been more *civil*, and less tainted with *ranting* enormities. It may be then, thy Education hath been sober, and thy inclinations not bent towards the grosser vices; thou hast not committed any *horrid* crimes, or *such* sins as look *gastly* in the conscience; and consequently thy Conversion hath not those *terrors*, and that *dread* in it, those melting sorrows, and violent expressions of grief that thou observeest in some others. Though it be *thus*, thou hast no reason to be discouraged, if thy sorrow be *so much* as to engage thee to *bumble* thy
thy

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thy self before God, sincerely to beg *grace* and *forgiveness*, and to obtain from thee *hatred* of thy sins, and resolutions against them; *that sorrow* of thine is *godly sorrow*, and part of true *repentance*, though it have not the greatest *degrees* of *vehemence*: These may be wanting on another account also in them that are truly penitent; their *tempers* may be more *cold*, and their *passions* calmer, than others are; and on this score their *resentments* less *notable*, and the *expressions* of them less *eager*: So that *violences* in *sorrow* are not alwayes *arguments* of *true repentance*, nor the *absence* of them a *sign* of *impenitency* and *hardness*. If thou art so sensible of sin as to *desire* and *endeavor* to overcome and forsake it, thou art a *penitent* in part, and thou oughtest to come to the Sacrament for the *strengthening* of *that sense*, and to gain *more assistance*, and *more resolution* to subdue thy sin. And if there be any real *defect* in thy *sorrow*,

row, repair thither, that it may be awakened, and excited to degrees more *becoming* and *effective*.

But (2) The Objection presseth as to the *other* part of *Repentance*. *I cannot leave my sin*, and therefore dare not approach the holy Mystery. But dost thou *desire* it? dost thou *endeavor* it? If *so*, though thy desires are imperfect, and thy endeavors weak, yet it is thy duty to present thy self at the holy Table. *There* thou mayst expect to have thy *desires increase*, and thy *endeavors beightned* and *encouraged*. And how both the former act of repentance, which is *sorrow*, and *this* of *aversion*, are promoted by the Sacrament, I have particularly shewn in the former periods, to which I refer you for fuller answer to this and such like objections.

Thus of the scruples that arise from the first Head, the apprehension of our *own unworthiness*. I descend to another.

(II) Some

(II) Some abstain from the *Sacrament* because of the *Unworthiness* of *Others*; *wicked* men are admitted, and they will not have *communion* with *such*. Yea, they are commanded to have no *fellowship* with them, *Ephes. 5.11.* and to *come out from among them*, *2 Cor. 6. 17.*

For the answering this, I propose these things to be considered.

(1) Hast thou taken the *Method* of our *Saviour*, *Matth. 18. 15.* with the sinner, from whose communion thou thinkest thou must withdraw? Hast thou *privately* told him of his faults? Hast thou admonisht him before *witnesses*? Hast thou told the *Church*? If *so* thou hast done, and he persist still in his wickedness, he will no doubt be *legally* excluded from *Christian Communion*; and so the foundation of thy doubt will be taken off.

(2) How art thou *sure*, when thou seest those thou callest *wicked* come to the *Sacrament*, that they
do

do not *repent* of their wickedness, and come to the holy Ordinance to *beg pardon* for their sins, and *strength* against them? How dost thou know that they are not come to *bind* themselves by deep resolutions, and sacred vows, to a *spiritual warfare*, and a *new obedience*? Their coming makes *profession* of *such designs* and *resolutions*, and how dost thou *know* that *that* profession is *insincere*? Hast thou a way of prying into the heart?

But the man returns to his sins as soon as he hath done, and hence thou wilt say, thou knowest his *hypocrisie*. This indeed were something, if it could be certainly *foreseen*; but how he will demean himself *after the Sacrament*, thou canst not *foretel*; This may have more effect upon him than *former Sacraments* have had: This, I say, may be, and *charity thinketh no evil*, but *believeth all things*, *hopeth all things*, 1 Cor. 13. or, if it now again prove otherwise, it is no certain evidence that

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that the man *onely* made pretence, and shew; he might *then* mean and *design* truly and well; but *temptations* and his *lusts* were *too strong* for him, and carried him away against all his endeavors and resolutions.

(3) Thou performest *other* sacred duties, in which thou *rememberest* Christ, and hast *communion* with God, in the *company* of *evil men*. Thou joynest in *hearing*, and public *prayers* with *such*; and why mayst thou not be *present* at the *Sacrament* with them?

If it be pretended as a *reason* of *difference*, That hearing the Word, and Prayer, are *converting Ordinances*, but the *Sacrament* is *not* so: I ask thee then, whether thou meanest by [*converting*] a *turning* men from *open Infidelity* to the *Profession* of the *Christian Faith*, and the *owning* of *Christian Virtues*? or *onely* the *turning* those that *profess* *this Faith* and *Religion before*, to the *practise* of them. If thou intend-

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est the *former*, the Sacrament indeed is *no converting Ordinance*; nor are the *Word* and *Prayer* ordinarily used for *such* purposes among us, where the Gospel is already generally profest: And thou dost not bear the company of the wicked of which we speak in the places of publick worship, upon any *such* expectation.

But if by *converting ordinance*, thou meanest (as is most likely) such a one as God useth as a *means* to cause men professing the name of Christ to *depart from iniquity*, to *turn from sin to holiness*, and from the *power of Satan unto God*; I see no reason why any should think, or say that the *Sacrament* is *no converting Ordinance*.

If it be not, either 'tis because the Sacrament is *no proper means*, or because God *will not concur* by his *Grace* with it. Neither of *these* can be said with any shew of reason: Not the *former*; for why should not the *solemn remembrance* of

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of *Christ*, and the *consideration* of what he hath *done* and *suffered* be a *means* for the *killing* of *sin*, which he came to *destroy*, and the *promoting* *holiness*, which he *lived* and *died* to *advance*? yea, *what* can be supposed more *likely* and *powerful* for the *promoting* of *that blessed* purpose? why should not the *sign* and *seal* of Gods gracious *Covenant* to give *pardon* and eternal *Glory* to all that forsake their *sins*, and live an *holy* life, be a fit instrument to *provoke* those that understand it, to *renounce* their *sins*, and to *devote* themselves unto *holiness*? why should not that *solemn*, *sacred* *engagement*, that all that know what they do lay on themselves at the *Sacrament*, to *endeavor* to *depart* from every *known* *evil*, and to *practise* every *known* *duty*, be a *means* to oblige them to it? Certainly there is nothing that in the *nature* of the *thing* seems to be a more *likely* instrument to convert men from a *life* of *sin* to a *life* of *holiness*; than the
sacred

sacred remembrance of our Lord at his Table. *So that* if this Ordinance be not *converting*, it must be, because God *will* not *concur* by his *grace* in it: But whoever saith *that*, speaks what he *cannot know*, and *cannot prove*; he talks *without book*, and *against* it; and is so extravagant in his assertion, that it would be folly to attempt the confuting of him.

This I have said on this occasion, not to ingage in a *Contraversie*, but to clear a matter of *Christian* practice. And the very root of *this* Objection lies in this conceit, That the *Sacrament is not a converting Ordinance*; For which, there is *nothing* but *Phancy*, and the *bare sayings* of some *mistaken* men. But now if, as I have proved, The *Sacrament* may be, and is an *Instrument* of *Conversion*; Then, why should any refrain, because evil men are admitted to it?

(4) If wicked men come to the *Sacrament* that are not *prepared* for

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for it, their *unpreparedness* is their *sin*, and *they* shall answer for it; But *we* ought not *therefore* to neglect our *duty*, because *they* have omitted *theirs*. We may, and we ought to advise, and admonish them to prepare themselves for the Ordinance before they come to it: If they will not follow our brotherly admonition, we cannot help it; we have done what *we* can to render them *more worthy*, and *their sin* shall not be laid to our charge. To *prepare our selves* for the *holy Communion*, and to address our selves unto it, is *that* which we are sure concerns us; If we neglect, 'tis *our sin*, and *other mens sins* will not excuse us. *Their sinning in one kind*, should be no reason why we should *sin* in another: There is no reason that we should starve our selves, because others take the bread that belongs not to them.

(5) If we are *worthy* Communicants, and others receive *unworthily*, They have *no Communion* with

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us, nor we with them : They onely eat bread , and drink wine ; but we partake of the mystical body and blood of our Lord. Our Communion is with the Father , and with his Son Jesus Christ, and with the Faithful, worthy Receivers ; but the unworthy partake neither with us nor them. If an Ape leap upon the Table, and eat of the bread where Friends are met at an entertainment, Is he therefore a Guest ? is he one of the Company ? If writings are to be mutually sealed there among the Friends, and that Creature catcheth up the Seal , and doth as the Covenanters do, is he therefore a party ? He doth the same action , but not with the same designs and ends ; and these make the communion. The case is thus in reference to those ungodly men that intrude to the Sacrament ; and the pious Communicants have no reason to think themselves concern'd in their company. Their bodies are together, but their spirits act and move different

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wayes. The *Communion* is *spiritual*; and only those that receive as they *ought* have *fellowship* with *Christ*, and with *one* another. And this were enough to answer *that* part of the objection also, that is taken from *Scripture*, where we are forbid to have *fellowship* with wicked men. But I add

(6) When Christians are prohibited wicked *Fellowship*, *Ephes. 5. 11.* It is evident that the prohibition concerns *heathen mysteries*, which are there call'd the *unfruitful works of darkness*, because they were used in *close recesses*; and *v. 12.* the Apostle saith, *It is a shame to speak of those things that are done of them in secret.* Christians were not to *communicate* with the *Heathens* in their *abominable Mysteries*: No, nor may they partake with wicked men in any *action of vice*, nor make them their *bosome* friends, nor be concerned with them in *other matters* more th n needs; especially if they are *openly prophane*, and *obstinately*
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ungodly. But it doth not therefore follow, that they must forsake their Lords Table, and the most solemn expressions of duty to him, because evil men *intrudingly* present themselves unto it.

And whereas Christians are commanded to *come out from among them*, and to *be separate*, 2 Cor. 6. 17. 'Tis plain, that the persons they are required to separate from were *Heathens* and *Idolaters*: For they are called *Unbelievers*, v. 14. *Infidels*, v. 15. And that they were *Idolaters*, is intimated v. 16. *What agreement hath the Temple of God with Idols?* whence it follows, *wherefore come out from among them*. So that this place doth not concern the present business; Christians were to *separate* from the Worship of *Heathen Idolaters*, but it doth by no means follow hence that they must forsake the *true Christian* Worship, because *evil* men (who yet profess *Christ*) afford their presence at it.

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And this may suffice for Answer to the Objections taken from the *unworthiness* of others that are admitted in *mixt* Communion.

Lastly, The *unworthiness* of our ~~way~~ of *administration* is pretended by some, as a reason why they cannot communicate with us. As to this Objection I shall not say much, because the *Toleration* His Majesty hath granted, hath given the Dissenters the liberty of their own supposed better and fitter methods. Therefore I shall only speak briefly to two exceptions of this sort.

(1) The *Sacrament* is administered among us in the way of *Forms* of Prayer, which they think to be contrary to *spiritual* Worship. And (2) *kneeling* at it is required, which they suppose to be contrary to the first example, and so an irregular posture of receiving.

To the first, I say these things,
(1) Worship and Prayer may be *spiritual*, where *Forms* are used;
For

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For the *spirituality* doth not consist in the *invention of words*, but in the *due intention* and *ingagement* of the *soul*. If we pray in *faith*, with *humility*, *self-resignation*, and *holy desire* of the good things we pray for, we pray *in the spirit*, though by a *Form*. And if, on the other hand, we express our selves in *conceived Prayers* never so *fluently* and *earnestly*, and have not *those dispositions* of soul upon us when we pray, our prayers are *formal*, though without a *form*. Which of these is *fittest in it self*, I shall not dispute, but only say, that *neither* is *unlawful*, but *both* have their use: and add, that *one sort* may be *propereſt* at *one time*, and the *other sort* at *another season*; so that 'tis *silly superstition* to be devoted to the opinion of *one* of them, as absolutely to condemn the *other* as *unlawful*. In publick *Worship*, *Forms* have the advantage in securing the *gravity* and *solemnity* of it, and in *this too*, that the *Worshippers know* what

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it is they joyn in : But in *secret* devotions *conceiv'd* prayers may sometimes *serve* better with particular occasions, and may ingage the affections more. So that either of these may be used, as shall best accord with the ends of prayer. And when the publick *Authority* of the Church requires the one, we may not scruple it, though we are more affected with the other; especially, since we may in *private* take the liberty to use which of them we think fittest.

(2) Those that are most against *Forms*, pray by them, when they joyn with another that prays, though he do it never so much *ex tempore* : For the Peoples mindes are not concern'd in *inventing* the words they pray by; the Minister gives a *Form* to them. And if you may pray in the *Form* of a *private* person, dictated to you *suddenly*, and without *deliberation*, and which you do not know before, whether it will agree with *good sense*, or *sound doctrine*; why then may you not

not do it in the *Forms* of the Church, compos'd by *wise* and *reverend* persons upon *mature consideration* and *advice*; especially when they are *such*, as we *do*, or *may know before* to be *pious* and *grave*, *fit*able to *Christian necessities*, and *Christian truths*? There is no good reason that I know to make a scruple of the *latter*, if we admit the *former*. But I shall say no more now of this subject, which would require a particular discourse. I come to the *second Branch* of the *Objection*.

(II) *Kneeling* at the *Sacrament* is not agreeable to the *first example*; our Saviour administer'd to his Disciples *sitting*, and perhaps you fear there is something of *Popery* in the posture of *Kneeling*.

I answer (I) we are not bound to a nice and punctual observance of *all* the *circumstances* that were in the *first example*: The Sacrament was first administer'd in the *Evening*, in an *upper room*, *only* to twelve

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persons, and *those Men*, and Ecclesi-
asticks, or at least such as were de-
stined to be so: But even the Obje-
ctors do not think we are obliged
to act in the Sacrament strictly af-
ter the example of *these* particu-
lars: and why should we suppose
our selves to be tyed in the mat-
ter of *Posture*, more than in those
other Circumstances, which we ac-
knowledge to be of no binding
nature. (2) The *posture* of those
times at Meals was not *sitting*, but
leaning, according to the *then Cu-*
stom of the Romans. So we read
John 21. 20. That the beloved Dis-
ciple *leaned on his Masters breast at*
Supper. And though the *English*
Translation renders, *Luke* 22. 14.
He sate down, and the Disciples with
him; it is in conformity to our
phrase and *custom*, which is *sitting*:
for the word in the Original
[καθέπεσε] doth not imply *that po-*
sture, but is applicable to *any* other
that is used, as well as *sitting*. So
that if we are *strictly* tyed to the
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original posture, we must *lean* at the Sacrament, and neither *sit* nor *kneel*. But (3) the Institution hath not bound us to either the one or the other, but left the matter to be determined by the *general Rules* of *Decency* and *Reverence*; And since the *Fathers* of the *Church* have commanded *kneeling*, as the posture most expressive of our *humility* and *reverence* in receiving the pledges of divine Love, I see no reason why any should boggle at it; much less why they should refuse their Duty, and their Privilege, abstain from their spiritual food, and the solemn remembrance of their dear Lord, rather than do a thing so *innocent*, so *decent*, and so *reverend*, which the Authority of the Church requires from them. He hath but little appetite to his meat, that will not eat it except he may do it in such a fashion as is agreeable to his own humor.

I, but the Objector doubts, that there is real danger, and something

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of Popery in the case; the *Papists* use kneeling to signify their *adoration* of the *Host*, and the *Scruples* fears there may be some such thing in our practice. But this fear is very *uncharitable* and *groundless*, since our *Church* doth so *vehemently* and *constantly* declare against the *Transubstantiation* of the *Romanists*, and the *adoration* of any creature; And since we are always told, that kneeling is required for no other reason than to signify our *humility* and *reverence*: And though the *Papists* do express more by that posture, yet since our *Church* declares, that *this* is all she intends in reference to the *consecrated* Elements, there is no ground why any should think more is meant by it. Kneeling signifies *reverence* as well as *worship*; and the *declaration* of the person himself is enough to shew which of them he intends. But besides, though the *Papists* adore the *Bread* as the *real* Body of *Christ*, and therefore kneel before it, yet that can be no reason why

why we should not in this remembrance of our Lord *adore Him Himself*: They kneel to him as present corporally; we worship him as *virtually* and *spiritually* present.

This I might urge further as a positive Argument for the *posture* of *Kneeling*, over and above the use of it, as an Answer to the Objection. Thus all acknowledge, That *Christ* is to be *worship'd*. Receiving the *Sacrament* is the *proper worship* of *Christ*; and *kneeling* is a *proper* signification of *adoration*: It follows that on *this* account *kneeling* is *fit*, and *fittest* to be used in the action of Communion. But I shall pursue this matter no further; what I have said may satisfy the *modest* and *reasonable*; and people that are set and resolv'd in their opinions, will not be satisfied with never so much more.

I should now draw to an end, but I am loath to leave you without some particular *Rules* of *Preparation*; These I shall lay down plainly

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plainly and briefly in the ensuing periods.

CHAP. VI.

THe Persons that are to come to the Sacrament may be distinguished into two sorts, *viz.* Either *such* as do *repent* and are *sorry* for their *Sins*, but have not yet in any good degree *prevailed* over them; or, Those *other* more *improved* and *grown* Christians, who in considerable measure have mastered their *Sins*, and are endowed with many habits of *Holiness* and *Virtue*. The *first* sort are yet under the *Law*, *viz.* a state of *sense* and *conviction* of *Sin*, but have not attained to the glorious *Liberty* of the *Sons* of *God*, or the state of power over them. But the others have arrived to *that* power in competent measure, so that sin doth not reign in their mortal bodies, because they
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are not *under the Law*, but *under Grace*. For distinction sake I call the first sort, **Bare Penitents**; the second, the **Faithful**. Now the *Preparations* that concern *these* are different as their states are.

I. For the *bare Penitents*, and *sorrowers* for Sin, I advise them to prepare by the *Rules* following.

(1) Endeavour to make your selves as *sensible* as you can of the *evil* of *sin*; Consider it as *enmity* unto God, and to your own happiness; as the *basest ingratitude*, and the *greatest deformity*; as a thing to be *hated* for *it self*, if there were no consideration had to its *effects*. Look upon it as the *destroyer* of your *present*, as well as *future* peace and felicity; as the *enslaver* of your souls to the *Devil*, and that which *debaseth* them to the likeness and condition of *beasts*. Aggravate such considerations in your thoughts by all the circumstances that may render sin odious to you.

(2) Con-

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(2) Consider the *gracious* nature of the *Covenant* that God hath made with us in his Son ; That by that *Covenant* he hath assured all true *Penitents* of *pardon* of their Sins , and *strength* against them. So that be our Sins never so *many* , or so *hainous* , they will be *forgiven* , if we *repent* and turn from them ; and be they never so *strong* and *violent* upon us , they may be overcome , if we accept , and use the grace that the *Covenant* offers to us. Represent these things duly , and frequently to your thoughts , and for the making the deeper impressions on them , collect those places of Scripture that speak so fully of the *Love* and *Mercies* of God , his *readiness* to *pardon* ; and *desires* of our *happiness* , the *frequent* and *free offers* of his kindness ; His *invitations* to Sinners to come unto him , and his often *bewailings* of their *obstinacy* and *hardness* in running from him : Consider that he sent his Son into the World to
seek

to the Lords Supper. III

seek, and to save *them that were lost*, to bring *sinners to repentance*, to take away the *sins of the World*, to deliver us from the *wrath to come*, and that the *World through him might be saved*; I say, draw together such passages, dwell upon them in thy Meditations, till thou hast fill'd thy Soul with them. And then thou wilt finde great incouragement to seek for pardon, and wilt be supported against those faintings, and despondencies, that the meer sense of Sin, without a Saviour, might occasion in thy Soul.

(3) After this, summon up all thy *Resolutions* against thy Sins: Consider thy *Baptismal* engagements, how *just* and *reasonable* and *necessary* they were; Resolve to *confirm* them by *new Vows*. Content not thy self with some *cold* and *indefinite* intentions of leading a new Life *some time or other*, but indeavor to settle in a *firm, unalterable* purpose of *fighting* against Sin, and *living* unto God. Do all thou

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thou canst by *Reason* and *Religion*, by the *Considerations* of *Duty* and of *Interest*, to fix thy soul *here*. And then,

(4) Be earnest with God in *Prayer*, to give thee a fuller sight of Sin, and *clearer*, *surer* thoughts of *pardon*ing Mercy: To present thee with more arguments to heighten thy resolutions, and to make thy soul *more* capable of being moved by them. I say, apply thy self unto God by *Prayer*, *publick*, *private*, and *secret* prayer, confessing thy own vileness, acknowledging his Mercies, and resolving new obedience. And being thus prepared,

(5) Look on the holy Sacrament as thy great *Duty* and *Remedy*. As *that* to which God calls thee, and the state and necessities of thy soul call thee; As that Ordinance in which thou art to *seek*, and *mayst expect pardon* and *strength*, *resolution*, and *peace*. Consider *this*, and raise thine *appetite* and expecta-

pectations; for *they that hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled.*

And now when thou hast exercised thy self in *these* acts, and the time of the holy Communion approacheth, Then

(6) Imploy thy time in *awakening* and *affectionate* thoughts of Christ thy Lord. Consider the *greatness* of his *Condescension*, the *kindness* of his *Undertaking*, the *holiness* of his *Life*, the *purity* of his *Doctrine*, the *heaviness* of his *Sufferings*, the *power* of his *Resurrection*, and the *glory* of his *Ascension*. Turn thy thoughts earnestly, and often, upon *these* and *such* instances of the History of the holy Jesus, and by them dispose thy self to a befitting remembrance of him at his Table.

And (Lastly) Gather up all thy thoughts and resolutions together, viz. thy *apprehensions* of the *vileness* of *sin*, of the *Grace* of the *Covenant*, and the *merits* of thy *Lord*;
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Thy *purposes* of leaving every evil way, and of renewing thy *baptismal Vows*; and say to thy self, Now is the time come that I must use *these thoughts and resolves*, that I may obtain pardon, and strength, victory over sin, and assurance of happiness: My Lord invites me to the great *representation* of the evil of sin in his *own sufferings*; to see his *Body wounded*, and his *Soul made an Offering for Sin*, in the *Type of Bread broken*, and *Wine poured out*, To remember his *Conquest over Sin by Death*, and a glorious *Resurrection*; To see the *Covenant of Grace* and pardon *sealed*: He invites me to *these Priviledges*, and calls upon me to bind my self stronger in this holy Covenant, and thereby to make my self the subject of those blessings it assures and conveys. I say, imploy thy Soul in such thoughts, and bring them with thee to the Lords Table, spread them before him *there* in humble Confessions, Supplications, and Acknow-

knowledgments, and thou mayst then expect to receive the benefit thou art seeking after.

These are Preparations for a bare Penitent, that hath yet made but little progress in subduing of his Sins. And though the *highest degrees* of all these are not absolutely necessary to the coming of *such* to the Lords Table; yet the *more* they have been exercised in them, so much the *better* it is, by so much they *re more prepared*, and so *much more* they may expect of the benefits. But if your minds, that have not been used to *spiritual* things, will not fix long on *such* thoughts and meditations: Ingage them, as far as you *can*; proceed in the Method prescribed with that *diligence* and *care* that becomes one that is *serious*. And *then*, though your preparations be *imperfect now*, they may be *more compleat* against *another season*. If thou art sensible they have been so *defective*, maintain and keep up that sense, and resolve up-
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on it, to endeavor to fit thy self better for *another* Sacrament, by renewing the *same* method, which will be *easier* for thee in the *progress* than it was in the *beginning*.

As for the other sort, viz. II. *Those* that have *advanced* in the *conquest* of their *sins*; They are to *act* over all the *former particulars*, that I have advised to the *bare Penitents*: For being yet *sinners*, and *imperfect*, they have need to use *that Method*: And there are these few *other Directions* to be briefly added that do further concern them.

(1) Call your selves to a *particular* account concerning your *sins*, examining *what vices* you are most *addicted* to; and *what* are the *sins* of your *tempers*, or of your *Profession* and *Calling*: when you have found *those*, exercise *particular acts* of *Repentance* upon them, and renew your resolutions against them. Consider, that allowance of them is inconsistent with *sincerity*, and a state of true *regeneration*; That 'tis necessary

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necessary you should oppose and subdue them; and that the holy Sacrament is to be used as a means for that blessed end.

(2) Examine *what ground* you have got *upon your sins* since the last Sacrament, whether you are now more tender and fearful of offending God than you were before; whether your inclination to any evil be more weakened and mortified? If so, take encouragement hence to go on with more Christian vigor and resolution. If not, humble yourselves for your unfruitfulness; and endeavor to dispose your souls to make a better use of the next opportunity.

(3) Inquire into the state of your souls as to your Graces; *what Graces* are wanting, and *what* are weak? *which* are growing, and *which* at a stand? and when you have found the condition of your souls as to these, then exercise your meditations upon those particulars in the Life, Doctrine, and Precepts of

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of your Lord, whom you are to remember at his Table, that may be *proper for your case*; Apply your thoughts, and cares, and resolutions that way. *Design and resolve* to attend the holy Sacrament for the *supply* of those *wants*, and to endeavor to use it *so*, that the *needed graces* may be *obtain'd*, and the *weak* ones may be *strengthened*; that *those* that are at a *stay* may be put into *motion* forwards, and *those* that are *growing* may be *further improved*. If you thus provide, and imploy your selves in the method before remembered, you will then be meet partakers of the *holy Mysteries*, and may assure your selves of the *blessings* and *advantages* which they convey.

THIS Subject would have required larger discourse, but my *present* business was principally with the *careless* and *negligent*, to whose condition I have mostly applied my self. For the *others*, that are solici-

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tous for their souls, and desirous to be further informed about this great and important affair of *Preparation*, I shall advise them to get, and carefully to read and digest two excellent Books of the Sacrament: The former called *Mensa Mystica*, or a *Discourse concerning the Sacrament of the Lords Supper*; by Dr. *Simon Patrick*; and the latter, named the *Christian Sacrifice*, containing most excellent *Meditations* and *Prayers*, both *before* and *after* the *Sacrament*.

In the *first design* of this little Discourse I intended to have added some things of that sort for your use. But while I was thinking of it, my Pious, Learned, and Excellent Friend the Author, sent me one of those his last Books, the *Devotion and Piety* of which is *extraordinary*; and there is nothing, that I know, fitter to *prepare* your *affections*, and to excite them to the noblest height of *desire* and *love* than those *heavenly Meditations*: And you cannot

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cannot use more *proper, judicious, or affectionate Prayers* than those he hath annexed. So that I was exceeding glad when I saw this useful, much needed Work so incomparably well done, that there was no occasion of my doing any more in it, than earnestly to recommend that book to your perusal. And I intreat you to get it into your Houses, and from time to time to endeavor to warm your souls by it, when you are *preparing* for the *Sacrament*, and by it to *fix* you in your *resolutions* of *living according* to your *engagements there*, when you have attended on that blessed Ordinance.

And now, my *Friends*, I leave you to the *blessing* of *God*, and the *consideration* of what I have said: Whatever judgment may be made of it, I have this testimony, that I *meant* it *sincerely*. And I shall never cease to pray, that both you and I may sincerely practice according to it.

Your Faithful Monitor and Servant,
J. G.

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